# Blood & Water

Okay. Warning for character-death, possible incoherence in my writing and a general 'I've no idea of even where it'd be set, canon-wise' sense. Raphael and Gabriel, PGish.

(do angels even bleed?)

His vessel is bleeding out, failing as he begins to realize that he is losing this fight, might not make it out of it alive.

He barely has the energy left to make the vessel move, let alone breathe or slow the bleeding, and there is still his brother facing him, sword in hand.

He cannot die here. Not like this. That is all he can think.

Gabriel has worn this vessel for over a thousand years, and he had hoped to show its original occupant the future before granting it a death it had prayed for, last time Gabriel had let it assume consciousness, but it seems that its prayer may be answered early: Gabriel abandons his vessel, lets its blood soak the earth and watches the soul depart, briefly.

Then he is flying, no longer on the same plane of reality as Earth is, no longer constrained by rules of common reality, as he tries to remember the old ways back to Heaven.

If he must die, then he will die at home, and if he has to race death there, well, that's what he'll do.

He thinks, darkly, that it's fitting that he die at the hands of Heaven's Healer, for it is Raphael following him.

Except that Raphael isn't hurrying, and if Gabriel were on earth he'd call it the gait of a predator who knows that its prey has been wounded, and all it needs to do is find it.

Gabriel shoots past the Gates of the First Heaven (Shamayim) and lets himself collapse at the edge of its ocean. He's barely alive, and the only reason he is here now is a combination of surprising Heaven's guards and Raphael's patience.

He sees Raphael with more-than-human eyes and feels his presence and whispers a prayer that might not mean anything, not after he's been gone so long, but it is still Heaven and Raphael is not given the chance to finish him: he lets go of his last breath, and is gone.